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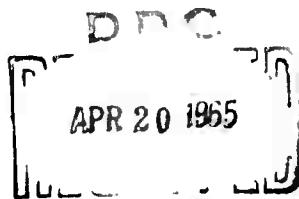
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A REVIEW OF WILLIAM W. KAUFMANN'S, THE McNAMARA STRATEGY

Bernard Brodie

March 1965

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A REVIEW OF WILLIAM W. KAUFMANN'S, THE McNAMARA STRATEGY

Bernard Brodie *

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The Kennedy Administration had not been long in office when one began to hear from Pentagon friends that the man whom the President had chosen as his Secretary of Defense was not just extraordinary; he was un phénomène.

First there were stories of his tremendous zeal for getting on top of his new job. Senior members of his staff hurrying to the Pentagon on Sunday mornings would feel the hood of the Secretary's car, to determine by its temperature how long he had been at work. Usually they found the metal distressingly chilled. Stories about his restless energy and his fantastically long hours of work were, however, shortly giving way to other stories stressing his enormous personal competence. He knew, they told us, how to keep firmly in hand the running of a large operation, he apparently possessed an extraordinary capacity for learning and absorbing relevant facts and

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structuring them appropriately in his mind, and he clearly had a gift for decisiveness. Soon one began also to see evidences of a quite phenomenal degree of personal and political courage.

But perhaps the most novel and remarkable of Mr. McNamara's attributes was that he seemed to have ideas of his own about strategy, ideas which owed little to military orthodoxy and which he seemed quite ready to pursue against monumental opposition both at home and abroad. Previous Secretaries of Defense had rarely interposed judgments on military matters except to set limits on expenditures or when it was imperative to resolve in one way or another issues on which the Joint Chiefs were irreconcilably at odds. Mr. McNamara seemed to care little whether the Joint Chiefs were in agreement or not. He wanted rather to know the specific reasons for their individual views, and if those reasons struck him as logically or factually unsound he rejected them. This was a sharp and cold wind indeed to have blowing through the Pentagon.

It is Mr. McNamara's special brand of strategy that Professor Kaufmann's book is all about. This of course is what its title proclaims it to be, but one is nevertheless somewhat shaken to find the subject matter so relentlessly true to the title. Except for a brief paragraph near the beginning, in which we learn among other things that Mr. McNamara has been a supporter of the NAACP and of the American Civil Liberties Union, we hear nothing more about the kind of man he is, which is rather a pity. We can see, to be sure, that Kaufmann enormously admires the Secretary's talents. Once or twice a faint

trace of criticism is allowed or perhaps rather forced to appear, but one feels it is mostly for the sake of the record.

With respect to Mr. McNamara's strategic ideas, it is clear that Kaufmann's approval, or rather identification, is complete. There are no doubt special reasons for this identification, because otherwise the fact of its existence might occasion some surprise. Those who remember Kaufmann's earlier work appreciate his capacity for reserved and often critical judgment of other people's views. A piece of his that won wide public attention was a carefully developed and sharp rebuttal of the "massive retaliation" views of the late Secretary John Foster Dulles.¹ And in the pages of this journal he published some years ago a strongly critical review-article of Professor Henry Kissinger's first book, which up to that time had received almost exclusively enthusiastic praise from other reviewers.²

In the formal sense, it is easy enough to distinguish between Professor Kaufmann's own major contribution in the book and that of Mr. McNamara. The entire first chapter, called "Prelude to Revolution," is a brilliant historical summary by Kaufmann which sets the stage for his account of the McNamara reforms in both philosophy and method. The remainder of the book consists mostly of his skillful

¹ See the first of his three chapters, entitled "The Requirements of Deterrence," in the symposium edited by him entitled Military Policy and National Security, Princeton University Press, 1956.

² "The Crisis in Military Affairs," World Politics, Vol. 10, No. 4, July 1958, pp. 579-603.

weaving together of excerpts from speeches and papers by Mr. McNamara -- or, occasionally, as the latter speaks through the mouth of one of his assistants. On the other hand, as we shall see later, the sharpness of this distinction is somewhat misleading.

Most readers will, I think, find most interesting the book's second and third chapters, entitled respectively, "The Search for Options," and "Dialogue with NATO." It is in these chapters that the most distinctive and also the most controversial aspects of Mr. McNamara's strategy are illuminated. Some might consider Mr. McNamara's attachment to cost-effectiveness analysis, described in the fifth chapter, as equally controversial; but in my opinion the controversy on that score has been of much more parochial character.

Actually, cost-effectiveness considerations must come very close to being as old as war itself. What is novel about the modern type of analysis is the marvelous development and refinement of the method and also the conscious and open dedication to the effort. Perhaps Mr. McNamara is chargeable with sharing with some of his subordinates an over-valuation of its reliability and a relative insensitivity to some of its limitations, but if so it would be a criticism of something marginal, not basic. Although sophisticated people recognize the possible existence of biases tending to distort the technique itself, most public criticism of it has been of a different and lower order. Most professional military people today, at least in the appropriate decision-making ranks, recognize its utility, though they are sometimes pained by the

conclusions it produces, and very few people outside their ranks object to it at all.

What is distinctive about the McNamara approach is partly a code and partly a fund of specific ideas. Kaufmann describes the former in the following terse terms (p. 49):

He likes to see objectives concretely defined. He abhors the thought that there is only one way of doing something; he is intensely interested in alternatives. And he is a restless seeker of ways to measure the effectiveness of the alternatives. Several of McNamara's operating principles are in the highest tradition of military planning. He dislikes having programs out of balance; he sees no point in calling up soldiers when there is no ammunition for them to shoot. He is an economizer of resources, always on the alert for ways of determining how much is enough to perform a given mission. He is an advocate of taking out insurance against the failure of a program or an action. And above all, he recognizes that the world is an uncertain place and believes in plans that take the uncertainty specifically into account. One way to deal with uncertainty is to buy options, and that is what he seeks.

That word "options" one now recognizes as a favorite term of Mr. McNamara's. He is perhaps too loath to consider the possibility of diminishing or negative returns in the broadening of options, for example through gratuitously scaling down or making unnecessarily ambiguous the penalties that might otherwise seem to be threatening potential aggressors. Besides, providing options usually costs money, sometimes a good deal of money -- a consideration to which the Secretary is reputedly not insensitive.

On the other hand, when one recalls the kind of deliberate constricting of options that characterized some

of the military planning under the previous administration, where there seemed to be in some places a deliberate desire to limit to nuclear means alone our ability to respond even to the most minor military threats (e.g., Quemoy, in 1958), one has to recognize that some of Mr. McNamara's passion for enlarging options is simply a wholesome reaction to an earlier and noxious insistence on the reverse. However, reactions can go too far, and anyway there is more to it than that.

What we usually understand as the McNamara strategy concerns mainly that special kind of enlargement of options that stresses the importance of alternatives to the use of nuclear weapons in military actions. It is of course important to remember that Mr. McNamara, together with President Kennedy, were on taking office also determined to build up American strategic capabilities -- there was some honest confusion at the time about a "missile gap" -- and statistics scattered through Mr. McNamara's speeches and repeated in this book emphasize the magnitude of the nuclear buildup since the beginning of 1961. Much of the substantial (about 25 per cent) increase in the military budget under the new regime was a result of the nuclear-strategic buildup. Nevertheless, the most essential, the most critical, and certainly the most seriously controversial aspect of the Kennedy-McNamara strategy is its extraordinary emphasis on building up conventional forces, an emphasis which entirely suffuses the "dialogue with NATO" as well as decisions on the home front.

Before we go into the subject itself, it is appropriate to inquire about the sources of Mr. McNamara's strategic ideas. After all, until becoming Secretary of Defense he

had been a member of the administration of the Ford Motor Company, and had just taken office as its president. There is no indication that he was a deep student of strategy at the time, though he had been an effective staff officer in Air Force logistics during World War II. Even one as brilliant as Mr. McNamara does not develop overnight a capacity on his own for finding his way through some extremely baffling issues concerning deterrence and war, especially with the kind of confidence that enables one to reject with aplomb relevant advice from the officially appointed military advisers.

It would no doubt have been contrary to the primarily political purposes of Kaufmann's book for him to have attempted to trace the origins of the ideas that Mr. McNamara has made his own, but his refraining from doing so certainly limits its scholarly value. He can be excused partly on grounds of modesty. His own contribution has not been small, not least as one who has helped prepare speeches and papers for the Secretary. One wonders how many of the words that Kaufmann quotes from McNamara are originally out of Kaufmann. But there have been other contributors too.

The sources of political and strategic ideas are often unnecessarily obscured. Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor once took issue with a statement of mine that the basic views with which the R.A.F. approached World War II were derived from Douhet. Sir John denied this indebtedness vehemently, insisting that in his early years in what was then the Royal Flying Corps he had never heard of any of his superiors reading or quoting Douhet; in fact he had never heard of Douhet. The R.A.F. was accustomed to attributing the origin of its particular

philosophy to its chief founding father of World War I fame, Lord Trenchard.

My reply had to be that if Lord Trenchard and his colleagues did not get their ideas from Douhet, then Douhet must have got his from them. That is, the ideas were far too much alike in detail to argue anything but a common source. Important ideas which become precepts for a whole service are no more likely in strategic philosophy than in any other kind of philosophy to have multiple spontaneous origins. Actually, Sir John's not having heard of any colleagues reading Douhet impressed me not at all. Apart from the fact that it is almost inconceivable that Douhet's small body of writing had not been read by at least some few important persons in the R.A.F. at a critical stage in its development, people who make borrowed ideas their own are not, except in the rarefied world of scholarship and then only marginally, given to burdening themselves with scrupulous references to the sources of their best thoughts. Actually, for politicians and soldiers there are special handicaps in doing so -- unless the originating thinker is sufficiently hallowed and preferably dead.

We know that President Kennedy himself was, upon taking office, very much dedicated to the idea of enlarging our conventional capabilities and placing heavier reliance on them. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee he had been an unusually avid reader of books and other materials on military strategy, and he had absorbed the obviously congenial ideas on limited and non-nuclear war that by 1959 and 1960 were already very much in the air in American strategic discourse. We know also from Professor

Richard E. Neustadt that the first and most compelling of what Neustadt regards as President Kennedy's three main purposes in office was to "get the nuclear genie back in the bottle."³ He had a deep antipathy to the thought of nuclear "proliferation," which was certainly connected in his mind with the obligation to reduce our own dependence on nuclear weapons for resisting aggression. However, as a busy politician who had to have an all-round approach to the nation's problems, we may be sure that President Kennedy's basic strategic ideas were derived from others and not developed in any detail. We can say only that by the time he became President he was ready to be receptive to any anti-nuclear military philosophy that came his way.

We also know that former Secretary of State Dean Acheson, who may have had some influence on the thinking of the Kennedy Administration, was also for quite different reasons in favor of a conventional buildup. Mr. Acheson was Secretary during most of the Korean War, when we had a modest stockpile of nuclear weapons but did not use any. His favorite phrase at the time urged the advantage of "negotiating from strength," a slogan which stressed the need for more peacetime power but which somehow seemed to throw the major emphasis on the necessity for postponing the great acts he had in mind until the new power was acquired.

Lately he has been writing and orally preaching the advocacy of a buildup of conventional strength in Europe

³ See his "Kennedy in the Presidency: A Premature Appraisal," Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 74, No. 3, September 1964, especially p. 325.

for the purpose mainly of rolling the Russians out of East Germany and thereby achieving the reunification of Germany, which unless achieved he holds to be the main threat to European peace in the future.⁴ Mr. Acheson seems always to be yearning for a kind of power different in character and magnitude from what is currently available to us, fantastically great though the latter may be, and with it he will do wondrous things. One thinks of King Lear, proclaiming magnificently:

. . . I will do such things --
What they are yet I know not -- but they shall be
The terrors of the earth.

However, Mr. Acheson's views are relevant mostly to show that there is nothing strikingly unusual about the pro-conventional flavor in the strategic concepts that Mr. McNamara has made famous. But those concepts have a special richness that indicate another source (which Mr. Acheson has also tapped). I think the question is interesting and important, and I go into the matter less unwillingly because there is after all nothing nefarious about anyone's influencing the thinking of his own national administration. Most of us frequently try, and as likely as not envy those who succeed. The only thing remarkable about this instance is the magnitude of the success.

⁴ See, for example, the speech that Mr. Acheson delivered on September 30, 1963, at the Fifth Annual Conference, in Cambridge, England, of the Institute for Strategic Studies. It is published in No. 5, bearing the title "The Evolution of NATO," of the Adelphi Papers issued by the Institute. It is almost needless to say that Mr. Acheson's views have received an overwhelmingly unsympathetic and indeed often hostile reception among his European audiences, who prefer to think of NATO as a defensive alliance.

Henry Kissinger and the distinguished French writer Raymond Aron, as well as many others, have generally attributed the McNamara philosophy in its most characteristic attributes to the influence of The RAND Corporation. Professor Kissinger could have stated it more exactly. He knows that it was a relatively small group of persons formerly associated with RAND but with an exceptionally strong in-group cohesion among themselves and thus a sometimes marked degree of personal and intellectual separation from most other members of that organization that developed a philosophy extremely close in detail to that which Mr. McNamara has since made his own.

The leader of this group has been the eminent Albert Wohlstetter, who though invited chose not to become a member of the new Administration but consulted with its leaders and also remained in very close contact with others in his old group, especially Henry Rowen and Alain Enthoven, who did become important members of McNamara's staff. Wohlstetter's contribution has now been officially and publicly acknowledged in the glowing citation with which Mr. McNamara presented him with a Distinguished Service Award in February of this year. Kaufmann was also a dedicated follower and participant, and though he too refrained from becoming a full-time member of the Administration (preferring to take a professorship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) he has done a great deal of work as a consultant for Mr. McNamara. These are all brilliant men, fervently dedicated to their common point of view, and with personal characteristics that make them as a group remarkably persuasive. Mr. Charles J. Hitch,

also formerly at RAND and currently the Comptroller of the Defense Department, has been close to the group as friend and colleague, but his interests are mostly of a different sort.

It is interesting to notice that all these persons (and some other close associates) were originally trained as economists except for Kaufmann himself, whose graduate training at Yale and subsequent connection with Princeton were primarily as a political scientist in international relations. Rowen and Enthoven, who are in fact relatively youthful, have often been listed among the "whiz kids" of whom we have heard so much, and are very likely the major source of the strategic ideas associated with that fraternity. Enthoven is now Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis, a kind of work in which he is undoubtedly expert. It is somewhat intriguing to consider the probability that Mr. McNamara's passion for this kind of analysis had much to do with his attaching to himself a group of persons who just happened to entertain a special philosophy which actually has nothing at all to do with systems analysis.

But what, if anything, is wrong with what we now call the McNamara strategy, with its powerful emphasis on the conventional buildup? It has on the whole received in this country astonishingly little criticism in print. All civilized people share in greater or less degree the desire to put the "nuclear genie back in the bottle" (though, like the classical genie, it has also done some useful service -- like critically reducing the probability of war between the United States and the Soviet Union). Therefore any tendency

to de-emphasize the reliance on nuclear weapons looks on the surface good, especially in view of our previous tendency to overemphasize it.

We must also remember that the number of persons in this country who are responsible for advancing the leading ideas in the strategic thinking of our time, though at least an order of magnitude greater than a dozen years ago, is still very small. It is even smaller, very much smaller, abroad. Thus, an idea or group of ideas can often win what looks like an overwhelming acceptance simply because the number of literate and articulate people who need to do the accepting is small and relatively easily accommodated. They all know each other personally and usually share much common experience. The military have been on the whole -- in varying ways and degrees depending largely on the branch of service involved -- opposed, resistant, or ambivalent to the McNamara ideas, but for a variety of reasons, including required obedience, have not been especially articulate about their views. The real opposition has come from our NATO partners abroad, but this has been motivated far more by political and economic than by intellectual considerations.

This is hardly the place to attempt an adequate critique of even one major aspect of the McNamara philosophy. I have in fact attempted elsewhere such a critique of what I regard as the overemphasis on conventional capabilities.⁵ Let us in passing notice just a few things about it that are at least questionable.

⁵ See my "What Price Conventional Capabilities in Europe," The Reporter, May 23, 1963.

First we should observe that the philosophy of de-emphasizing nuclear weapons has apparently required a considerable building up of our conventional capabilities, and a strong pressure on our Allies to do likewise. Our buildup has meant a sizable net increase in our own already high military budget, as well as a continuation of the draft, and this at a time which includes the period that we have called détente. More to the point, and most curiously, the very fact of the Soviet run-down in ground forces in Europe has in effect been cited as justification for our building ours up, because their run-down made it appear feasible to match them. The idea, repeated in this book, is that the re-evaluation of Soviet ground strength in 1962, after the failure of McNamara's Ann Arbor (and Athens) speeches to change our Allies' views, "sent McNamara back into the campaign for additional non-nuclear capabilities." (Page 120.) In the Ann Arbor speech Mr. McNamara had already said that the Soviet superiority in non-nuclear forces in Europe was at the time "by no means overwhelming." (Page 119.) But surely the size of the Soviet forces in 1962 represented what was left after a considerable run-down that Khrushchev began in the late 'fifties but that the Soviets finally halted in late 1961, when they observed our own contrary efforts.

Now, it might still be logical to build up forces in the period of détente, even when the opponent is running his down, if in fact it can be established that we had allowed our relevant forces to deteriorate well below any reasonable minimums. But how much is needed? Referring perhaps to Kissinger, or possibly even to me, Kaufmann

says somewhat loftily at one place: "It was difficult to take seriously the critic who claimed that the United States was asking for too large a conventional build-up in NATO, and damaging the alliance in the process, when he would not say what, in his opinion, would constitute the proper level of forces." (Page 204.)

One can turn that remark around and ask the builder-uppers what in fact does constitute in their mind "the proper level of forces," a subject on which they have been quite ambiguous. At one point Kaufmann does state approvingly that the increase from eleven to sixteen combat-ready divisions, plus twenty-one tactical air wings and three Marine divisions, "now gave him [McNamara] something like a 10-division strategic reserve. With it he could handle a Korean-sized engagement and still have several divisions left over for another emergency." (Page 79.) A Korean-sized "engagement"! The American people considered it a war, and a nasty, unduly prolonged, and unsatisfactorily concluded one at that. They are not eager to enter another such -- as their present attitudes toward Vietnam confirm.

It is at least moot whether it would not be the sheerest folly to fight another Korean-sized "engagement" without using tactical nuclear weapons, or rather opportunely threatening their use in order to deter the conflict altogether. Could the Chinese possibly fail to fear a war with us in which we might use nuclear weapons tactically? Could it conceivably be true that our attachment to conventional weapons would have no effect in degrading the deterrence value of our nuclear stockpile -- as the school we are discussing so often alleges -- if we let Communist

China fight another war with us of Korean magnitude without encountering tactical nuclear weapons? Certainly the view that Kaufmann shares with his colleagues and attributes to McNamara may be correct, but its correctness is very far from being self-evident.

In that connection one really ought to call attention to the total obsolescence of a variety of standard arguments with which the philosophy is usually advanced, such as that we must not be "forced to choose between doing nothing or deliberately initiating nuclear war." (Page 68.) Or, as the author quotes Mr. Nitze as putting it: ". . . it would be neither wise nor credible for us to build our doctrine and our forces on the premise that every pinprick must be met by nuclear war." (Page 131.) Nobody now entertains any such premise. Nor have our conventional capabilities for a long time if ever been anything like that low. One notices also the familiar associated assertion that increase of conventional weapons "would give a sense of freedom and initiative that primary reliance on nuclear power does not provide, increased bargaining power with the Soviet Union. . . [etc.]" (Page 132.) One ought sometimes ask, how? What bargaining power do we genuinely lack now or have lacked recently that additional conventional forces have brought us or would bring us?

Implicit or explicit in these arguments, and apparently necessary to them, is an image of the Soviet opponent and an appraisal of our experience that must be labeled as patently incorrect. For example, as Kaufmann states it, ". . . the record was replete with instances where, despite the direst threats [italics mine] of massive or limited nuclear retaliation, forbidden actions of one kind

or another had taken place." (Page 72.) Well, what were they?⁶ And how did it happen that our threats were not carried out when the acts they were suppose to forbid were perpetrated? Kaufmann goes on: "But there remained a large set of aggressions which had not been deterred in the past and were unlikely to be in the future -- unless someone set the record straight by using nuclear weapons in response to one of these acts." (Page 106.) And still again: "A strategy based solely on deterrence, and nuclear deterrence at that, seemed almost a frivolous way to treat the Soviet threat. It had already failed to deter a number of provocative acts and was likely to remain of limited utility in the future." (Page 118f.) Or "It seemed virtually impossible to convince the Allies that nuclear capabilities long since had been found wanting as an all-purpose deterrent." (Page 128.)

What these terrible but avoidable failures had been are not specified, except for some vague references to "the crises of Berlin and Cuba." The most specific reference

⁶We certainly made no "darest threats" of massive or other nuclear retaliation in the case of the so-called "Berlin Blockade" of 1948-49, the gravest crisis we have had in Europe since World War II. Moreover, we now have abundant evidence (which I have outlined in a paper not yet published) to support the conclusion that in that affair the United States was completely bluffed concerning ground access -- that is, that Stalin was clearly determined to avoid getting into hostilities with the United States over the issue and in fact never made any threat of the use of force to deny us such access. Thus, the ground "probe" that various highly-placed persons were advocating at the time would almost certainly have met with no active resistance. Stalin of course wanted us to interpret his actions as a denial of access, so long as we made no trouble over it.

is: "Despite these efforts, the monstrous Wall dividing East Berlin from West Berlin went up on August 13, 1961." (Page 258.)

One ought certainly ask, what would we have been prepared to do about that wall had we had ten more conventional divisions in Europe, or twenty? Contrarily, if we wanted to do something bold, why did it require a single additional soldier? How much did the strictly local forces affect the Russians' willingness or unwillingness to get into open hostilities with us? Or for that matter our willingness or unwillingness to get into such hostilities with them?

Actually, the greatest single challenge to the status quo, the greatest "failure of deterrence," was precisely the Cuban crisis of October 1962, when our conventional forces had already been very considerably built up by the Kennedy Administration. After the event various persons attributed Khrushchev's spectacular retreat primarily to our large conventional superiority in the Caribbean. Oddly, in a passage not quoted in this book, Mr. McNamara expressed himself before a Congressional Committee as thinking otherwise. In his opinion it was the entire strength of the United States, including and above all its nuclear power, which caused the Soviet Union to retreat so precipitously.⁷

⁷ Among Secretary McNamara's words were: ". . . in any event Khruschev knew without any question whatsoever that he faced the full military power of the United States, including its nuclear weapons. . . . we faced that night the possibility of launching nuclear weapons and Khrushchev knew it, and that is the reason, and the only reason, why he withdrew those weapons." Department of Defense Appropriations for 1964, Part I, Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, 88th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 30-31.

To return to the question of how much is enough, Mr. McNamara can be quoted as apparently urging two very different positions within a few weeks in 1963. On January 30, 1963, his book-length "Statement" for the House Armed Services Committee suggested, implicitly but clearly, that Allied conventional forces in Europe ought to be large enough to contain just about any size of Russian attack so long as it is non-nuclear.⁸ (One must wonder at the image of a fantastically venturesome Soviet Union massively attacking by conventional weapons alone our nuclear-armed forces in Europe!) But on February 22, 1963, the Secretary's responses to questions before the Senate Committee on Armed Services expressed a quite different opinion. In the latter place one finds him specifically rejecting the thought of using conventional forces in Europe to deter anything other than "certain low-scale forms of Soviet political and military aggression which they might be tempted to carry out were they not opposed by forces of the type that are being strengthened" (pp. 376-378 of the published Hearings).

These discrepancies, and they are many, incidentally suggest a major defect of the Kaufmann book. It is almost completely derived from carefully prepared speeches or "statements" by Mr. McNamara, where his staff plays so large a role, including formal presentations in hearings before Congressional Committees. Rarely used, however, are his usually spontaneous and often exceptionally candid answers to questions in those hearings. At least it is a defect if we want to know what Mr. McNamara really thinks.

⁸ See especially pp. 18 and 54 of the mimeographed version released to the press.

Space does not permit us to go into the question of Mr. McNamara's NATO policies, in which respect his considerable efforts seem on balance to have had quite negative results. With no professional background in international politics, he would have had to rely heavily on advice. What kind did he receive? Kissinger has remarked on his astonishment that an Administration made up largely of intellectuals should show so little empathy for ancient and proud allied states that are less strong and less rich than we but whose leaders are not necessarily less intelligent or less well-informed on world political affairs.

Surely we have too often appeared to be prejudging for our Allies where their own self-interest lay. Their views on that subject are entitled to respect even when we disagree. We are, for example, entitled to regard the French nuclear effort as contrary to our national interests, but hardly to project a sense of outrage at their doing simply what we have done. Nor should we presume that French arguments presenting their view of their interests are devoid of merit. After all, some of those arguments have been expressed impressively by people like Aron, who is not especially nationalist and certainly not lacking in intelligence. Kaufmann feels that to have shown any sympathy or even tolerance for those views would have been "to subscribe in effect to the view that the United States would soon become an unreliable ally. . . ." (Page 111.) In another place, in discussing the MLF idea, which many Americans as well as most Europeans regard as unnecessary and potentially mischievous, Kaufmann remarks: The United

States, perhaps naively, had tried to be constructive."
(Page 127.)

The Western Europeans have for some years felt little or not at all threatened by military aggression from the Soviet Union, and they wonder whence comes all our scorn for nuclear deterrence. It seems to them to have worked very well indeed. They have therefore seen no reason for increasing their terms of conscription (or introducing it where they did not have it) and adding to military budgets which they considered already large enough. That our Government had other views does not prove that our Allies were utterly foolish or frivolous.

I do not wish by these words to imply any approval for the particular brand of conspicuous and often malicious non-cooperation that President de Gaulle has enjoyed practicing. Even so, on the MLF issue as on various others, we were pursuing with determination a collision course with him that was wholly unnecessary and that made the utmost nonsense when justified as a means of furthering the unity of NATO! Mr. McNamara was probably not responsible for it, but it finally took a politically insightful person like President Johnson to put a stop to it.

Work on the Kaufmann book was substantially completed when Secretary McNamara had been in office for less than three years. Actually, the concluding section, called "Epilogue," is given over entirely to a speech that he delivered to the Economic Club of New York on November 18, 1963, just four days before the assassination of President Kennedy. Mr. McNamara has since completed another year and a half in office, and undoubtedly has many more such

years before him. The story is yet to be finished, let alone adequately told. We can therefore look forward to new, more complete, and also more detached interpretations of what will undoubtedly be one of the most significant careers of any Presidential cabinet member in American history.

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